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Help for Government Publications

the Vocationally Handicapped

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Ministry of
Community and
Social Services

March 1978

**Hon. Keith Norton, Minister
Robert D. Carman, Deputy Minister**

**Prepared by the Rehabilitation Branch,
Ministry of Community and Social Services**

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Introduction

Ontario's Vocational Rehabilitation Services program, administered by the Ministry of Community and Social Services, is designed to assist physically and mentally handicapped individuals to become employable and, whenever possible, self-supporting.

The services of this program are regulated by The Vocational Rehabilitation Services Act and are available without charge to all eligible handicapped persons in the province.

The Ministry maintains, throughout Ontario, a staff of counsellors and supervisors who are trained to help the handicapped individual develop his/her work potential.

For each handicapped person using these services, a vocational program to suit his/her specific needs may be established. Programs are set up through counselling and use of community resources such as skill training centres, schools, universities, colleges and special workshops. Specialists in medicine, psychology, training and business may be called upon for further advice.

In addition, the Ministry authorizes and funds three community agencies to offer vocational rehabilitation services to those with specific disabilities: The Canadian Hearing Society; The Canadian National Institute for the Blind; and The Canadian Paraplegic Association.

Am I Eligible for Assistance?

You may be eligible for assistance under the Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program if you have a physical or mental handicap which limits your ability to work. Your disability may be one present from birth, or may be the result of an illness or an accident.

In order to help determine your eligibility, you will be asked to have a medical report completed by your doctor, verifying your condition. You will also meet with your counsellor to determine if you are eligible and whether you will benefit from the Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program.

You are *not* eligible for assistance if you are entitled to, or are receiving, Vocational Rehabilitation Services from the Federal Department of Veterans' Affairs or the Ontario Workmen's Compensation Board.

What Type of Assistance Will I Receive?

Once your eligibility has been determined, then a program that suits your specific needs will be worked out. The services you may be offered include: counselling, assessment, training, restoration, and job-placement.

Counselling

Counselling is one of the most important aspects of the rehabilitation process. Your counsellor will want to work with you outlining the most beneficial program for you, based on your needs, interests and abilities.

He or she is interested in you as an individual and will listen to your ideas and views as well as make suggestions. You should discuss your hopes, ambitions or worries, as they all affect the choices possible for your future.

Your counsellor will advise and guide you through each step of rehabilitation and will ensure that you receive the services that you require and which are available to you.

Assessment

You and your counsellor need to explore your abilities and interests in order to decide upon the most suitable vocational goal for you.

There are three main areas that need to be fully assessed:

Medical Assessment

Explores the extent of your disability and evaluates the ways in which it could affect your work capacity;

Social Assessment

Examines your personal resources and social skills to determine how these may be used and developed in your vocational rehabilitation;

Vocational Assessment

Focuses on your potential in specific areas in order to help you select the most appropriate vocation.

A psychological assessment may also be used to help you and your counsellor learn more about you—your aptitudes, your interests, and your ability to handle particular types of work or further education in specific areas.

After your assessment, your counsellor may be able to help you directly into suitable employment. If further help is required before you can obtain employment, further rehabilitation services may be provided for you.

Training

If your assessment indicates that you require vocational training, then a program will be set up to help you. There are several ways in which you may be helped to develop your work skills or be trained for a particular trade or career.

Further education or training may be provided at a community college, business or trade school, university or other recognized training institution. Your books and tuition would be paid for by the Ministry.

Throughout Ontario there are special workshops approved by the Ministry. These may provide you with training in a specialized skill or help you to develop overall good work skills and habits as a step towards job-placement, further training, or sheltered employment.

You might receive on-the-job training. In this case, the Ministry may share the cost of your wages with your employer while you are being trained.

Restoration Services

During the course of your rehabilitation program, the need may arise for certain medical and restorative goods or services which have a direct bearing on your vocational rehabilitation. Your counsellor will assist you in obtaining these. They may include:

- (a) medical and medically related benefits such as some forms of specialized treatment, and essential dental care;
- (b) restorative devices to restore or improve physical functioning such as braces, artificial limbs, hearing aids, automobile hand-controls, wheelchairs, etc.;
- (c) health insurance coverage may be provided free of charge in conjunction with your rehabilitation program;
- (d) special transportation services may be provided during your rehabilitation program, should you be unable to make use of public transportation due to a disabling condition.

Job-Placement

Vocational placement is the eventual goal toward which your rehabilitation program is directed. Counsellors of the Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program maintain close contact with other social agencies, employers, personnel officers and Canada Manpower Centres in order to help find a suitable job.

Job-placement counsellors are trained to select employment appropriate to the person's abilities as well as disabilities. A counsellor can, if necessary, interpret your handicap to the employer and help him to understand it while emphasizing your abilities and skills.

Occasionally basic tools or equipment are needed before you can start the job. In some instances, these may be provided by the Ministry.

Living Expenses

During your assessment and training, you may be eligible for a maintenance allowance to meet living expenses such as food, clothing, shelter and normal transportation costs.

Your eligibility for this allowance will depend on your assets and income. This allowance may also include provision for your dependents, subject to their income.

How do I apply for Vocational Rehabilitation Services?

To apply for these services, contact the closest District Office of the Ministry of Community and Social Services (listed on page 10) by mail or telephone. Be sure to tell them that you are enquiring about the Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program.

Referrals may also be made through doctors, hospitals, schools, clinics, volunteer and social agencies, Manpower Centres, various government services, family members and other concerned parties.

What if I am refused by Vocational Rehabilitation Services?

If, at any stage of the rehabilitation process, a benefit is refused, suspended or cancelled, you have the right to appeal.

The first step in the appeal process is to discuss the matter with your counsellor. If the problem is not resolved in this manner, then your counsellor will advise you of the appeal process available to you.

You will be advised in writing of the reasons for the refusal, suspension or cancellation.

Your case will then be reviewed at the District Office level, and if you are still not satisfied, you will be advised, in writing, that you may request a further hearing by writing to:

The Chairman
The Social Assistance Review Board
Ministry of
Community and Social Services
Room M1 - 56
Parliament Buildings
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1E9

Other Services

Residences

To locate a special residence for a handicapped person, contact the Housing Authority or District Manager of the Ontario Housing Corporation in your area.

For tenant placement in Metropolitan Toronto, apply to:

The Registry
Ontario Housing Corporation
101 Bloor Street West
Toronto, Ontario
M5S 1P8

For Students

A list of special facilities for the handicapped student at universities and colleges is available from:

Information Branch
Ministry of Colleges and Universities
6th Floor, Mowat Block
Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1E2
Telephone (416) 965-6134

Ministry District Offices

Southern Ontario

Barrie

Civic Square Tower
5th Floor
70 Collier St., Box 910
Barrie, Ont. L4M 4Y6
(705) 737-1311

Belleville

14 Bridge St. W.
Box 816
Belleville, Ont.
K8N 5B5
(613) 962-9562

Cornwall

132 Second Street E.
Box 1358
Cornwall, Ont.
K6H 5V4
(613) 932-3381

Hamilton

100 Main St. E.
39-40th Floor
Hamilton, Ont.
L8N 3X8
(416) 526-9300

Kingston

1055 Princess St.
Suite 103
Kingston, Ont.
K7L 5T3
(613) 544-6206

Lindsay

322 Kent St. W.
Box 7000
Lindsay, Ont.
K9V 5E5
(705) 324-6128

London

495 Richmond St.
London, Ont. N6A 5A9
(519) 438-5111

Metro Toronto

110 Eglinton Ave. W.
Toronto, Ont.
M4R 2C9
(416) 487-4392

Ottawa

2197 E. Riverside Dr.
Room 201
Ottawa, Ont. K1H 7X3
(613) 737-5520

St. Catharines

110 James St. Box 176
St. Catharines, Ont.
L2R 6S4
(416) 688-3022

Waterloo

75 King St. S.
Suite 501
Waterloo, Ontario
N2J 1P2
(519) 886-4700

Windsor

Ontario Gov't. Bldg.
250 Windsor Avenue
Windsor, Ont.
N9A 6V9
(519) 254-1651

York-Peel

20 Nelson St. W.
Suite 201
Brampton, Ont.
L6X 2M5
(416) 453-3181

Northern Ontario

Keewatin-Kenora

104 Government Rd.
Box 429
Keewatin, Ont.
P0X 1C0
(807)547-2801

Kirkland Lake

8 Hudson Bay Ave.
Box 398
Kirkland Lake, Ont.
P2N 3J1
(705) 567-3391

North Bay

222 McIntyre St. W.
Suite 408
North Bay, Ont.
P1B 2Y8
(705) 474-3540

Sault Ste. Marie

123 March St.
Suite 304, Box 68
Sault Ste. Marie, Ont.
P6A 5L2
(705) 256-5666

Sudbury

127 Cedar St. 3rd floor
Box 1120
Sudbury, Ont. P3E 4S6
(705)674-3151
Ext. 271

Thunder Bay

1200 Walsh St. W.
Thunder Bay, Ont.
P7E 4X4
(807)475-1515

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